

## MUSIC AND DRAMA

Herrmann the Great, at the Theater—Next Week's Play Bills—General Theatrical Notes.

A writer in *The Century*, taking up the subject of the alleged degeneration of the American stage—a theme recently discussed with various degrees of ability and fervor—argues that the chief cause of it is the greed, avarice and timidity of a large majority of the men who have established a virtual monopoly in the control of the theater and have tamperingly put an end to healthy competition. The writer says that over and over again it has been demonstrated that the plays going public with pay or trouble prizes for the privilege of witnessing a good performance of a good play, and yet the managers persist in adhering to this destructive policy of cheap and coarse entertainment of enormous extravagance, contenting themselves with the profits of the box office, the sale of refreshments on the part of Americans who fill the pockets of hotelkeepers and their house agents, with negligible regard for the development of native talent being that the development of native talent has been checked if not altogether destroyed, by the fact that the managers of these theaters, these speculators and vice, has deprived a great body of actors of nearly all opportunity for instruction or advancement.

The writer further points out that it is a small and exclusive class of people or persons which is revealed against the uses to which the stage is put, but a very large proportion of the best kind of citizens, scholars, students, etc., are among the audience, the most gaudy. They are beginning to think about themselves, not only on account of the offensiveness of some of the plays presented, but also on account of their general indecency and emptiness, the vanity and vainglory of it.

The evil, however, is not beyond remedy. There are themes enough of intense interest. The field of a playwright is certainly illumined and will little need to be sought for. In agreement, plenty of writers would be found willing and able to work it. Good American plays have been produced, even those of inferior quality, have been received with unmeasurably larger audiences than the most popular of the day. "Let the American theater," the writer in *The Century* says, "be devoted first to American interests, and it will not be long before the race of American actors will be recognized before the international stage." Which has been diverted from it. If it could sweep up the educational classes along, and will sink gradually in the level of the music hall, which it has been imitating.

### The Theater.

Various causes, chief of which was the blizzard that visited this region yesterday, continued to make the theater unusually quiet, and the manager, in his efforts to stimulate business, has had little effect upon Mr. Herrmann. The performance, nevertheless, was given in gay style and the audience at times was quite enthusiastic.

The cast of *Wise Men* started in with some of its pretty card tricks, and then found essay birds in a lady's bonnet and performed other equally mystifying feats. This part concluded with a very pretty illusion. Mr. Hartman, the author of the play of France, Germany, Italy and other nations. In the retelling of an old story they were again unfurled and had now become the Stars and Stripes extending across the stage.

The second part consisted of the Astoria train mystery, seen here several times. The third part, *Arturo's Dream*, was another pretty illusion in which a painting apparently comes to life, but the greater number on the program is the fourth, in which Mrs. Herrmann appears as her mother, the Queen of Sheba.

The stage is well lighted in imperceptible darkness. A flash of light evidently reveals the lovely form of the dancer. Powerful lights of various colors are now turned on her as she moves to graceful music. The effect is artistic, though somewhat dim. It is no wonder that the girl is the greatest among the English critics, and were encouraged instead of derided by pass that should know better, he would easily distinguish her from the other dramatic artists of the world.

The stage seemed to be clothed in diamonds and draped in the colors of the rainbow, a golden and silver world. The visit to the theater was well repaid by this performance alone.

The entertainment closed with a few more of the tricks at which Mr. Herrmann is such an adept. It will be repeated this evening.

Mr. Coughlin, the interested spectator and close observer of the performances, and perhaps the only one in the audience to whom the rule does not apply that "the closer you watch the less you see."

Miss Coughlin and L. R. Stockwell, with a strong cast over the title of her Rose Coughlin, L. R. Stockwell company of players will appear at the Salt Lake Theatre, Monday evening. They have just closed a successful engagement in San Francisco, playing for eight successive weeks at the Columbian theater to crowded houses.

Informed of the departure of this company, Mr. W. L. Smith, the manager of the theater, The Magistrate, Mr. Hodge's favorite old comedy, made and has. The Magistrate is presented by permission of Augustus Daly, who produced it for two seasons at his theater in New York, and last summer, Mr. Hodge, in the title role, plays the part with characteristic minuteness, and historical accuracy. He is an acknowledged favorite with his audience, and success has always attended his efforts.

Tuesday evening they will present for the first time here Misses and Mrs. Taylor and Charles Hodge, another name for Pele Wofford, in a new comedy, an episode in the life of Pele Wofford, the author of *Woolly*, *Woolly*, and *Woolly*. Mrs. Coughlin has an ex-

citent opportunity to exhibit her talents to the highest advantage.

Helen Hartland, a clever actress, a member of the cast, is also Miss Emily Lytton.

Other Billing's attractions are Mr. E. Gandy Hayes, who has been in the company with Helen, Dorothea and Ward and James and other notable actors.

Charles Billing's attractions appear at the Colonial on Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 27 and 28. The management promises a new, novel, refined and amusing entertainment. Among the specialties are the brothers, Mr. and Mrs. Hartland, Frank, Anna, and George Carter and Nancy, commanding the Dickens quartet; Harry Lowe and Eugene Everett, comedians.

### Grand Opera House.

Next week at the Grand Opera House will be presented *Vivian Grey's Comedy*—the only one he has ever written—*A Game of Chess*. It is an ingenious combination and elegantly written piece. For years he has remained steadily in the repertoire of the Grand Opera House. It was just before he died.

"Of course," said Mrs. Keeler, "he was a genius, but I don't think he ever wrote down. I used to sit and listen to him talk, and he would say, 'I have a message asking to be excused from the regulation company, as some trouble with my wife made it impossible for me.' The queen was quite willing to overlook the omission, and recommended him to the management.

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